

PRE- AND POSTTRIP FACTORS INFLUENCING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE AT A BATTLEFIELD COMMEMORATIVE EVENT: GALLIPOLI, A CASE STUDY

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Battlefield tourism is a major component of national and international tourism. This article sets out to provide a holistic understanding of the preevent factors influencing attendance at an event commemorating a famous World War I battle and to follow the cycle through to gain an understanding of what postevent factors influence event satisfaction and how this translates into recommending behavior. The Anzac Day commemorative event at Gallipoli, Turkey, provides the backdrop for this study. A two-step process was used to gather information from Australians partaking in the Gallipoli commemorations in 2007. A preevent questionnaire was distributed to a convenience sample of respondents while they were in transit from Istanbul to Gallipoli for the commemoration. In total, 482 preevent questionnaires were obtained. Step two of this process saw an exit questionnaire administered to a convenience sample of participants on the return journey to Istanbul, resulting in 331 completed postevent questionnaires. The pre- and postevent datasets were separately analyzed using factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM) where appropriate. The findings highlight the role of various event attributes, most prominently the ceremonial and experiential aspects of the Anzac Day commemorations, in encouraging visitor satisfaction and further flow-on effects for recommending behavior.

Key words: Battlefield tourism; Commemorative event; Pre- and posttrip visitation; Gallipoli

Introduction

Battlefield tourism has been recognized as a fast growing component of national and international tourism (Smith, 1998). Examples of battlefields as-

sociated with this phenomenon include the Western Front in France and Belgium, Waterloo in Belgium, Culloden in Scotland, Pearl Harbor and Gettysburg in the US, and Gallipoli in Turkey. While a continuous flow of tourists to these sites is evident,

visitation is often bolstered by commemorative events in honor of specific occasions such as a particular battle or Armistice Day.

One such commemorative event is the remembrance of Anzac Day by Australians and New Zealanders on April 25 at Gallipoli, Turkey. This event attracts up to 20,000 attendees annually (Hall, Basarin, & Lockstone, 2010). The significance of this place and event is borne out of the involvement of the ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) troops in World War I (1915) and their battles against the Turkish on the Gallipoli Peninsula at Anzac Cove. The aim of this article is to gain a holistic understanding of the influence preevent factors such as visitor motivation and information searching have on attendance at commemorative events and to follow the cycle through to gain an understanding of what postevent factors influence event satisfaction and how this translates into future recommending behavior. The Anzac Day commemorative event at Gallipoli, Turkey, serves as a case study for this article.

Literature Review

The literature review framing the current study provides an overview of the phenomenon of battlefield tourism, with specific reference made to the historical importance of the Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli. The importance of motivation and word-of-mouth recommendation in driving visitation will be explored, followed by visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions as an outcome of successful event experiences.

Battlefield Tourism and the Anzac Day Remembrance

Visiting battlefields around the world has become one of the fastest growing tourism phenomena in recent decades. According to Smith (1998), war-related tourism attractions are the largest single category of tourism. Tourists visit battlefields for a variety of reasons that include an interest in history or a desire to reconnect with the past (Winter, 2009). Others are trying to recreate the drama of the event within the actual physical surroundings. While some want to pay respect and com-

memorate those who took part in the battle, others attach a sense of spiritual sanctity to their visit, similar to that of religious rituals (Hannaford, 2001).

Slade (2003) argues that visiting Gallipoli is a profound experience in that "most of the Australians and New Zealanders who travel to Gallipoli are engaged in a journey of discovering themselves, their roots, and the meanings of their nations in the modern world" (p. 792). This motivation as it relates to national identity supports Stanley's (2005) contention that Gallipoli provided Australia with "its single most influential national myth" (p. 140).

What sets Gallipoli apart from other battlefield sites is that the overwhelming majority of visitors converge for 1 day annually to commemorate Anzac Day. With the declaration of a constitution, Australia became a federation of states and a nation in 1901. The Gallipoli campaign in the then Ottoman Empire was the first united action of this fledgling nation. Australian soldiers were combined with New Zealanders to establish ANZAC as a fighting force. Gallipoli was a disaster, with around 25,000 Australian casualties. Most Australian towns, villages, and hamlets had sons buried at Gallipoli.

Anzac Day was first commemorated in Australia in 1916. In 1923, each Australian state gazetted April 25 as a public holiday. The first Anzac Day beach service was held at Gallipoli in 1925; however, these in situ commemorations did not become widely popular until the 1980s (Wahlert, 2008). The 90th anniversary of Anzac day was celebrated in 2005 when 20,000 Australians attended. The prediction for 2015 is that there will be 50,000 visitors. The commemorations have demonstrated obvious signs of formalization and professionalism in recent years to cope with the ever increasing number of visitors.

Heritage commemorations, such as the one at the heart of the current study, have been defined as "memorial services, specific ceremonies . . . designed to honor the memory of someone or something" (Getz, 2007, p. 34). It has been suggested that this type of event has received limited research attention despite the fact that while "wars might or might not be planned, . . . victory celebrations and remembrance commemorations certainly are" (Getz, 2007, p. 108). The current article will go some way to address this knowledge gap by providing a holistic understanding of the factors influencing visita-

tion to commemorative events and the associated outcomes.

Preevent and Postevent: Understanding the Importance of Motivation, Satisfaction and Word-of-Mouth Recommendation

Li and Petrick (2006), in a timely review of the growing body of event motivation studies, articulate the earlier work of Crompton and McKay (1997) in noting that an understanding of event visitor motivation is “key to designing offerings for event attendees, a way to monitor satisfaction, and a tool for understanding attendees’ decision-making processes” (Li & Petrick, 2006, p. 239). Despite recognition of the fundamental importance of visitor motivation as a research construct, there remains a lack of studies examining people’s motives for attending commemorative events (Hall et al., 2010), and more generally, sites of battlefield tourism visitation (Seaton, 1999; Slade, 2003; Stone & Sharp-ley, 2008). The current article will make an additive contribution by using a quantitative method to provide a demand-side perspective of visitor motivations for attending a battlefield tourism commemorative event.

Apart from internal motives, it is likely word-of-mouth recommendation will have a strong influence on attendees’ preevent decision making. There is an increasing emphasis on this personal form of communication as an efficient means of attracting consumers in service contexts (Christopher, Payne, & Ballantyne, 2002; McLean, 1994). The basic premise is that an endorsement from a friend or relative has a major influence on purchase probabilities (Swan & Oliver, 1989), and relative to mass media, is an important and trustworthy source of information (Gatignon & Robertson, 1985). This is particularly important for services such as special events that occur on an irregular basis, and even more vital in regard to battlefield commemorative events that often do little in the way of formal advertising.

Postevent, the word-of-mouth recommendation of visitors may also serve as a key indicator of future intentions (Bennett & Barkensjo, 2005; Shemwell, Yayas, & Bilgin, 1998). This potential is closely linked to the construct of customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1981; Yi, 1991). In addressing rele-

vant service quality elements important to purchasers, service providers are able to improve satisfaction, a key predictor of future behavioral intentions including recommending behavior (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Dana-her & Mattsson, 1994; Meehan, 2002).

Focused research on the constructs of visitor satisfaction and recommending behavior in relation to events is limited and often context specific. Getz (2008) has identified the need to apply a range of management perspectives to address the dearth of research on event visitor satisfaction. Severt, Wang, Chen, and Breiter’s (2007) study of conference delegates and the work of Baker and Crompton (2000) and Lee, Petrick, and Crompton (2007) in relation to festivals are among some of the few event-specific studies examining the outcome relationship between visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions. There is a wider tradition of this research in the tourism literature (Petrick, 2004; Petrick, Morais, & Norman, 2001; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), set against the backdrop of behavioral prediction models more generally (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Severt et al. (2007) concluded that their “findings have been supported by numerous studies confirming that satisfaction leads to favorable word-of-mouth” (p. 406). The current exploration will extend the focus beyond these settings to account for the unique characteristics of a large-scale commemorative event on the site of a battlefield. Given the event under investigation, behavioral intentions are conceptualized in terms of willingness to recommend. This selection gives thought to the considerable costs (time and effort) some visitors, particularly those from Australia and New Zealand, face in attending the event, coupled with the temporal nature of events in general (as opposed to durable goods and regular services). As such, repeat visitation, particularly by overseas visitors, is viewed as being a less prevalent outcome of behavioral intentions in the current study. The current research also incorporates an antecedent measure of word-of-mouth recommendation in order to assess its influence in driving preevent visitation.

Research Aims and Hypotheses

This article employs a two-step process to gain a holistic understanding of the event visitation cycle

associated with a battlefield commemorative event. Firstly, the preevent influence on attendance of visitor motivations and various information sources is explored. Secondly, the article investigates postevent the influence of participant satisfaction on recommending behavior with regard to event attendance. In order to examine this relationship, it was necessary to develop a model that would adequately predict satisfaction with various service elements of the Anzac Day commemoration.

Methodology

A two-step quantitative method was employed to gather information from Australians partaking in the Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli pre and post event. Questionnaires were administered in consideration that most event attendees to and from Gallipoli travel by bus (Australian War Memorial, 2010; Hall et al., 2010). A cluster sampling approach (Malhotra, Hall, Shaw, & Oppenheim, 2008) was operationalized in this study. FEZ Travel, the market leader in hosting Australians to Gallipoli, transported 1,000 attendees to Gallipoli and 700 back to Istanbul for the 2007 commemorative event. A census of all FEZ customers was undertaken, which achieved a response rate of 48.2% (*n* = 482) on the way to Gallipoli and 47.2% (*N* = 331) on the return trip to Istanbul. It was thought that the largest provider of transport services was more likely to be representative of attendees than a smaller or niche operator. The researchers have endeavored to ensure that the sample is reflective of the population of attendees; however, it should be noted that nonprobability convenience sampling was used, ultimately affecting the scope of generalization of the results. While the study was not conducted according to the canons of probability sampling (Bryman, 2004), the convenience method is not uncommon in marketing and tourism research (Alipour & Vughaingmeh, 2009; Bosnjak & Brand, 2008; Bosnjak & Rudolph, 2008; Sparks & Pan, 2009; Wang & Davidson, 2009).

Step one of the study involved pretrip questionnaires that comprised a series of 10-point semantic differential scales querying respondents on their motives for visitation, perceived importance of various event elements, and information sources

used in formulating their travel plans. The postevent questionnaires were framed by Getz's (2000) conceptual framework, later used by Chaplin and Costa (2000) in their exploratory analysis of a commemorative event. The framework was modified to refer to the following aspects of the event: type of event and program, physical setting, purpose of the commemoration, cultural importance, political implications, impact and performance evaluation, target markets, economic importance, and educational importance. The questionnaire comprised a series of 10-point semantic differential scales with positive and negative anchors. The data were analyzed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling.

Table 1 profiles the demographic characteristics of survey respondents pre- and postevent. Both returned samples are highly comparable, indicating that the majority of attendees are relatively young (18–30 years old), female, well-educated, and employed individuals. There is little in the way of comparative data on Gallipoli visitation available as official statistics are not published by the event's organizers, the Australian Department of Veterans

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics

	Study One (<i>N</i> = 482) ^a	Study Two (<i>N</i> = 331) ^b
Age		
18–30 years	77%	73%
30+ years	23%	27%
Gender		
Male	42%	42%
Female	58%	58%
Education		
Primary/secondary	17%	21%
Tertiary	83%	79%
Occupation		
Managerial/professional	41%	41%
Para-professional	13%	12%
Clerical/secretarial	14%	15%
Tradesperson	14%	16%
Sales or hospitality	9%	8%
Machine operator-driver	1%	1%
Laborer/storesperson/unskilled	2%	2%
Unemployed	1%	1%
Student	4%	3%
Retired	1%	1%

^aDescriptive statistics: mean 28.0, SD 7.5.

^bDescriptive statistics: mean 28.2, SD 7.6.

Affairs. The sample characteristics, however, are similar to Yurtseven and Çatalca's (2003) study, which found that female attendees were in the majority (52%), that most visitors were aged between 18 and 29 (79%), and many were professionally employed (46%).

Results and Discussion

Preevent

The descriptive results (see Table 2) indicate that the respondents attached a high degree of personal importance to their Gallipoli visit. This was assessed using the following scale item, "Indicate how important a visit to Gallipoli on Anzac Day is for you personally?," where "Very Important" = 10 and "Not Important" = 0. Using a similar question format, respondents also indicated that it was highly important that every Australian visit Gallipoli at least once during their lifetime. This supports Slade's (2003) contention that for Australians and New Zealanders, visitation to Gallipoli is strongly associated with nationhood motives.

Further emphasizing the importance of Anzac Day in the psyche of Australians, almost half the respondents had previously attended an Anzac Day march on home soil. The findings of the preevent study provided initial support for the contention that repeat visitation was a less prevalent indicator of behavioral intentions in the current context; however, a small cohort of respondents (4.6%) had previously traveled to Gallipoli to commemorate Anzac Day and were repeating the experience in 2007.

When examining the information sources that influenced the respondents' pretrip decision making, it was found that the Australians participants used a variety of means to finalize their travel arrangements. Word-of-mouth recommendation is of pivotal importance in the travel industry (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008) and this was definitely

the case in regard to attendance at the Gallipoli commemorations. Table 3 shows that more than 70% of respondents indicated that word-of-mouth recommendation had been an important influence in their decision to travel to Gallipoli.

The Internet was viewed as an important source of information by 78% of respondents while a further 35% of attendees considered travel agents' websites as being a good source of information in planning their trip. Other sources of information that rated highly were travel guide books (59%), leaflets/brochures (42%), and magazines (40%). It is interesting to note that television and newspaper advertisements did not play a prominent role in influencing the decision making process of the Australian attendees.

An exploratory factor analysis was used to investigate the motivations associated with visitor attendance at the battlefield commemorative event under study. Using a Varimax rotation, the factor output accounted for 63% of the variance explained, with an acceptable KMO of 0.826 and a Bartlett's test score of 0.000, supporting the acceptability of the data for factor analysis. The analysis produced five factors representing various motivations driving visitation to the Anzac Day commemoration at Gallipoli (see Table 4).

The first factor (24.0% variance explained) highlights the desire to honor or mourn a relative or friend and in so doing visit a particular gravesite. The second factor (13.8% variance explained) focuses on the affirmation of values associated with those who took part in the battle. The third factor (9.2% variance explained) represents having a relationship to the site by being a member of the armed forces, accompanying a returned veteran, or ac-

Table 2
Importance of Visitation to Gallipoli

	Mean	SD
Importance of visiting Gallipoli on Anzac Day	8.4	1.7
Should every Australian Visit Gallipoli	8.0	8.7

Table 3
Important Influences on Attendance

Item	%
Word of mouth	70.6
Newspaper advertisement	24.5
Internet search	73.8
Travel agent's website	34.7
TV advertisement	12.9
Leaflet/brochure	41.7
Travel guide books	58.7
Magazine advertisement	40.2

Table 4
Motives for Visiting the Anzac Day Commemoration at Gallipoli

	Mourn	Affirm	Accompany	External Influences	Battlefield
Mourn	0.804				
Honor	0.749				
Visit particular grave	0.684				
Visit friend or relatives grave	0.613				
Relative at Gallipoli	0.502				
Gratitude		0.679			
Affirmation		0.671			
Remembrance		0.609			
Duty		0.503			
Attend commemorative service		0.490			
Show death not in vain		0.467			
Accompany veteran			0.815		
Accompany relative			0.725		
Veteran			0.683		
Influence of television or movies				0.706	
Influence of Internet				0.697	
Influence of previous attendees				0.458	
Influence of education				0.428	
Visit battlefield					0.797
Experience battlefield					0.471
Eigenvalue	4.807	2.763	1.848	1.323	1.082
% variance explained	24.04	13.82	9.24	8.62	6.41
Alpha	0.88	0.74	0.85	0.65	0.63

companying a relative on their visit. The fourth factor (8.6% variance explained) highlights the influence of information sources such as the media, Internet, and the personal recommendation of prior attendees in the decision to travel to Gallipoli. The fifth factor (6.4% variance explained) highlights the desire to visit and experience a battlefield firsthand. This analysis confirms a number of untested motives that have been previously associated with solemn nature of battlefield tourism (Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Winter, 2009).

The preevent data also highlight the influence of previous attendees and the prior experience of participants with regard to attendance at commemorative events and battlefields. This is especially relevant for the Gallipoli commemorative event as few Australians are able to make numerous trips from Australia to Turkey to attend the ceremonies, with less than 5% of the returned sample having attended previously. Therefore, information sources such as recommendations from previous attendees, the Internet, and knowledgeable travel agents play an important role in providing information, motivation, and in influencing the decision making of po-

tential attendees. Given this context, it is important to gain an understanding of how satisfied attendees are with their experience at the Anzac Day commemorative event at Gallipoli and how well this translates into future recommending behavior.

Postevent

The postevent focus of the study was on the influence of various elements of the Anzac Day commemorations on visitor satisfaction and subsequent recommending behavior. This step involved the use of both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Exploratory factor analysis was used to extract five factors that provided reliable measures of the constructs under investigation (see Table 5). These factors, representing various elements of the event, included amenities, ceremonies, emotions, experiential impact, and transport.

Structural equation modeling, using SPSS 17.0 and AMOS 17.0, was conducted to analyze the relationships between these factors (see Fig. 1). The model developed and estimated investigates the in-

fluence of the various elements relating to overall visitor satisfaction and the influence of visitor satisfaction on recommending behavior. One-factor congeneric models were developed for the constructs identified. Unsuitable items were removed when the one-factor models were fit to the full measurement model.

Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006) indicate that the guidelines for goodness-of-fit indices should be adjusted to take into account both sample size and the number of observed variables. While the goodness of fit indices are moderate, they are satisfactory for a sample size of greater than 250 respondents and between 12 and 30 observed variables, which are the cut-offs provided by Hair et al. (2006). The path model's fit indices indicated a good fit of the model to the data (CMIN/DF = 2.23, DF = 80, $P = 0.01$, GFI = 0.93, AGFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.94, CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.06).

The structural model identified in Figure 1 shows that seven of the structural paths were significant (all $p < 0.05$). These were satisfaction-amenities, satisfaction-ceremony, satisfaction-transport, satisfaction-experience, satisfaction-emotions, recommend-ceremony, and recommend-satisfaction. Of these factors, however, the ceremonial aspect of the commemorative event was most important driver

influencing the satisfaction of event participants (Standardized Regression Weight [SRW] = 0.60). A mediating effect whereby a third construct intervenes between two other related constructs could be investigated (Hair et al., 2006; Holmbeck, 1997; Kline, 2005). This third construct can theoretically facilitate variations in the relationship. Based on the full structural model (see Fig. 1), a mediating relationship between ceremony, satisfaction, and recommending behavior was tested. A direct path between ceremony and recommending behavior was specified. This path was significant ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.05$). The mediating relationship between ceremony, satisfaction, and recommending behavior comprised the indirect path between ceremony and satisfaction that was significant ($\beta = 0.60$, $p < 0.05$) and satisfaction and recommending behavior that was also significant ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the total effect of ceremony is 0.55, which represents the sum of the direct effect 0.34 in addition to the moderating effect of satisfaction 0.21 (0.60×0.35). The ability of the event to meet or exceed expectations in terms of its experiential aspects was also an important factor associated with satisfaction (SRW = 0.52). The emotional experience and transport factors were perceived as being the next most important factors driving visitor satisfaction.

Table 5
Event Attributes Associated With the Anzac Day Commemorations

	Transport	Amenities	Ceremony	Emotion	Experience
Return from Lone Pine	0.846				
Travel from bus to Anzac Cove	0.760				
Travel from Anzac Cove to Lone pine	0.749				
Overall ease of transport	0.716				
Amount of queuing		0.798			
Toilet amenities		0.707			
Rubbish		0.535			
Food and drinks		0.458			
Anzac Cove ceremony			0.881		
Lone Pine ceremony			0.611		
Ceremony appropriate			0.604		
Intensity of emotional experience				0.801	
Intensity of sadness emotion				0.683	
Experience better than expected					0.706
Experience life changing					0.498
Eigenvalue	4.413	2.147	1.723	1.326	1.005
% variance explained	29.42	14.32	11.49	8.84	6.03
Alpha	0.87	0.74	0.78	0.75	0.70

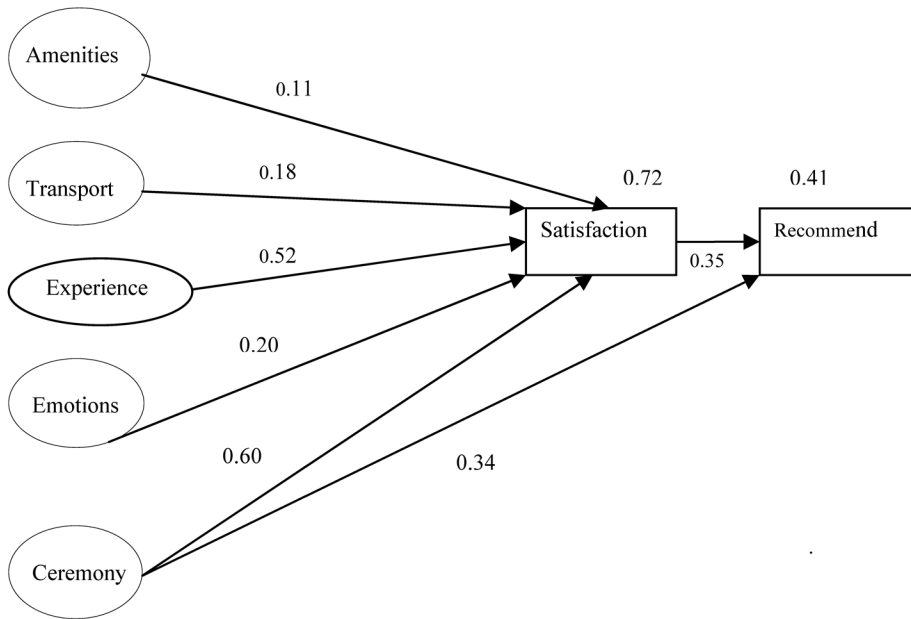


Figure 1. SEM model.

The structural paths between ceremony, satisfaction, and recommending behavior were also significant. The overall variance accounted for by the model with the dependent variable of satisfaction was 72% and 41% for recommending behavior.

To test the reliability of the model, the commonly accepted measure of model-based reliability, the item reliability coefficient was applied. Alternatively referred to as the Squared Multiple Correlation (SMC), the results of the model estimation indicated a wide range of SMC but confirmed that all measurements were within an acceptable range (see Table 6) (Holmes-Smith, Coote, & Cunningham, 2005). To test the constructs for convergent validity, the correlations between the items measuring the same constructs were examined for any excessive correlation of 0.8 or above (Malhotra et al., 2000). This examination showed that there were no excessively high correlations and all items within the same construct were positively correlated with other items that were intended to measure the same construct. To confirm the constructs had discriminant validity, the relevant implied correlations were used to ensure that each of the indicator items had their highest implied correlations for the item that was being measured. An investigation of the stan-

dardized residual covariance matrix identified that values were less than 2 and therefore supported a good model fit (Hair et al., 2006).

The postevent results complement previous research in confirming that visitor satisfaction can have a positive influence on intention to recommend. In extending this research to focus on a

Table 6
Squared Multiple Correlations and Factor Scores

Variable	Squared Multiple Correlations	Factor Score	Latent Error Variance %
Life changing experience	0.47	0.69	53
Better than expected	0.62	0.79	38
Ease of travel	0.76	0.87	24
Tour guide	0.37	0.64	63
Travel Lone Pine	0.58	0.76	42
Travel Anzac Cove	0.54	0.74	46
Ceremonies appropriate	0.47	0.67	53
Anzac Cove ceremony	0.79	0.84	21
Lone Pine ceremony	0.55	0.74	45
Queues	0.57	0.76	43
Toilets	0.74	0.88	26
Intensity of emotional experience	0.62	0.79	38
Sadness	0.35	0.60	65

large-scale commemorative event, this finding takes on special importance given that the organizers of the Gallipoli ceremonies do little in the way of formal marketing to encourage visitation. It would seem, therefore, that in providing a satisfactory experience for Gallipoli attendees, the organizers also create a conduit for flow-on visitation in the longer term to the relational networks of participants.

The results further indicate that this satisfactory experience is driven by the ceremonial and experiential elements of the Gallipoli commemorations. Intrinsic to the nature of the commemorations are the ceremonies that take place at Gallipoli on Anzac Day. These include the Dawn Service at Anzac Cove, followed by national ceremonies such as the singularly Australian event held at Lone Pine. These solemn remembrances provide attendees with the opportunity to mourn and honor fallen soldiers. It is unsurprising then that these drivers of satisfaction align closely with the motives of Australians in attending the commemorations at Gallipoli, as highlighted in the preevent findings (see Table 4), confirming the value of understanding visitor motivation as a means to optimizing satisfaction outcomes (Crompton & McKay, 1997, cited in Li & Petrick, 2006). Winter (2009) in citing Gatewood and Cameron's (2004) Gettysburg study, highlights that "many tourists had a deep emotional experience at the site, even though most had no family involvement, and had initially been motivated by historical interest" (p. 617). The postevent findings (see Table 5) in relation to the experiential and emotional elements of the Anzac Day commemorations indicate that a similar transformative force may be at work in Gallipoli attendees finding the experience to be a life changing one. Further demand-side research, particularly of a qualitative nature, would provide in-depth insights into the power of battlefield tourism experiences to engender such outcomes.

Conclusion

The article set out to provide a holistic understanding of the influence of preevent factors such as visitor motivation and information searching on attendance at commemorative events and to follow the cycle through to gain an understanding of what

postevent factors influence event satisfaction and how this translates into future recommending behavior.

Preevent, the article highlights that chief among the motives for attendance at the Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli, Australian visitors wish to honor and mourn fallen soldiers, to show gratitude for their sacrifice, and affirm held beliefs about the World War I conflict. These motives are intimately linked to the inherent nature of the event, it being a solemn occasion at the site of a historic battle. They also closely align with the elements of the Anzac Day commemorations that strongly influence visitor satisfaction; namely, the ceremonial and experiential aspects, signposting to the organizers the importance of maintaining the integrity of the ceremonies as the event grows in popularity. Pre- and postevent, the article has explored the virtuous cycle that word-of-mouth recommendations can create in influencing attendance at commemorative events. The Australians traveling to attend the 2007 Anzac Day commemoration relied heavily on this relational derived source of information. A lack of formal marketing around the event and the significant personal costs associated with attending likely ensure such recommendations play a heightened role in reducing risk and uncertainty around the decision to attend. Postevent, the established link between visitor satisfaction with the event experience and intention to recommend was confirmed in the commemorative event setting. Ongoing, an agenda of research is needed that continues to explore the visitor experience at commemorative events, delving into the deeply emotional, transformational nature of these events.

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